

## PRECAUTIONS AFTER A FLOOD

Walls, hard-surfaced floors, and many other household surfaces should be cleaned with soap and water and disinfected with a solution of **1 cup of bleach to five gallons of water**. Be particularly careful to thoroughly disinfect surfaces that may come in contact with food, such as counter tops, pantry shelves, refrigerators, etc. Areas where small children play should also be carefully cleaned. Wash all linens and clothing in hot water, or dry clean them. For items that cannot be washed or dry cleaned, such as mattresses and upholstered furniture, air dry them in the sun and then spray them thoroughly with a disinfectant. Steam clean all carpeting. If there has been a backflow of sewage into the house, wear rubber boots and waterproof gloves during cleanup. Remove and discard contaminated household materials that cannot be disinfected, such as wallcoverings,

When returning to your home after a hurricane or flood, be aware that flood water may contain sewage. Protect yourself and your family by following these steps:

### Inside the Home

- Keep children and pets out of the affected area until cleanup has been completed.
- Wear rubber boots, rubber gloves, and goggles during cleanup of affected area.
- Remove and discard items that cannot be washed and disinfected (such as, mattresses, carpeting, carpet padding, rugs, upholstered furniture, cosmetics, stuffed animals, baby toys, pillows, foam-rubber items, books, wall coverings, and most paper products).
- Remove and discard drywall and insulation that has been contaminated with sewage or flood waters.
- Thoroughly clean all hard surfaces (such as flooring, concrete, molding, wood and metal furniture, countertops, appliances, sinks, and other plumbing fixtures) with hot water and laundry or dish detergent.
- Help the drying process by using fans, air conditioning units, and dehumidifiers.
- After completing the cleanup, wash your hands with soap and water. Use water that has been boiled for 1 minute (allow the water to cool before washing your hands).
  - Or you may use water that has been disinfected for personal hygiene use (solution of  $\frac{1}{8}$  teaspoon of household bleach per 1 gallon of water). Let it stand for 30 minutes. If the water is cloudy, use a solution of  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon of household bleach per 1 gallon of water.
- Wash all clothes worn during the cleanup in hot water and detergent. These clothes should be washed separately from uncontaminated clothes and linens.
- Wash clothes contaminated with flood or sewage water in hot water and detergent. It is recommended that a laundry mat be used for washing large quantities of clothes and linens until your onsite waste-water system has been professionally inspected and serviced.
- Seek immediate medical attention if you become injured or ill.

# Protect Yourself from Mold

After natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods, excess moisture and standing water contribute to the growth of mold in homes and other buildings. When returning to a home that has been flooded, be aware that mold may be present and may be a health risk for your family.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT [WWW.BT.CDC.GOV/DISATERS](http://WWW.BT.CDC.GOV/DISATERS)